

## Message Text

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ORIGIN ARA-20

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SPM-01 INR-11 INSE-00 HEW-08 AID-20 L-03

H-03 SP-03 PA-04 PRS-01 USIA-15 RSC-01 CIAE-00 NSAE-00

VO-03 SCA-01 COME-00 EB-11 LAB-06 SIL-01 TRSE-00 /113 R

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INS - J. GREENE (SUBS PARA 3)

HEW - DR. HELMAN (SUBS PARA 4)

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TO AMEMBASSY MEXICO PRIORITY

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, SPOP, US, MX

SUBJECT: ALLEGED FORCED STERILIZATION OF MINORITIES

REF: A. MEXICO 7535; B. MEXICO 7260

1. SUMMARY: CASA IS A MEXICAN-AMERICAN ORGANIZATION ESTABLISHED TO PROVIDE COUNSELLING AND LEGAL ASSISTANCE TO ITS MEMBERS. INS DENIES ALLEGATIONS THAT IT ENCOURAGES STERILIZATION AND HEW STATES THAT FORCED STERILIZATION IS ENTIRELY CONTRARY TO THEIR POLICY. WHILE STERILIZATION IS WIDELY ACCEPTED IN PUERTO RICO IT HAS ONLY BEEN PROVIDED AS A VOLUNTARY METHOD OF FAMILY PLANNING. END SUMMARY

2. CENTRO DE ACCION SOCIAL AUTONOMO (CASA) IS A PRIVATE MEXICAN-AMERICAN ORGANIZATION LOCATED IN THE LOS ANGELES AREA, ESTABLISHED TO PROVIDE COUNSELLING AND LEGAL ASSIST-  
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ANCE TO ITS MEMBERS. IT IS SUPPORTED BY THE SPANISH-

SPEAKING THROUGH DUES AND EXTENDS ITS SERVICES TO IMMIGRANTS (INCLUDING BOTH LEGAL AND ILLEGAL ONES) AND TO ANYONE NEEDING COUNSELLING, WHETHER OR NOT THEY ARE MEMBERS. GENERALLY, IT IS AN ORGANIZATION THAT SEEKS TO SPEAK FOR THE SPANISH-SPEAKING COMMUNITY AND LOBBIES IN ITS BEHALF. IT APPEARS THAT CASA OFFICIALS HAVE MADE STATEMENTS, THE NATURE OF WHICH PROMPTED EXCELSIOR STORY.

3. INS CATEGORICALLY DENIES THE ALLEGATIONS: IT DOES NOT KEEP FEMALES IN DETENTION; IT HAS NO MEDICAL FACILITIES

FOR EITHER MALES OR FEMALES; AND IT DOES NOT COLLABORATE WITH ANY US HEALTH AUTHORITIES TO ENCOURAGE STERILIZATION FOR ANYONE.

4. HEW STATES THAT FORCING STERILIZATION UPON ANYONE IS AGAINST THE AGENCY'S POLICY. APPLICABLE REGULATIONS CALL FOR "INFORMED CONSENT," WHICH MEANS VOLUNTARY, KNOWING ASSENT FROM THE INDIVIDUAL TO WHOM STERILIZATION MAY BE OFFERED. THE INDIVIDUAL MUST SIGN A DOCUMENT INDICATING INFORMED CONSENT IS BEING GIVEN.

5. WITH REFERENCE TO THE STATEMENTS BY SPOKESMEN OF THE PUERTO RICAN INDEPENDENCE MOVEMENT, AT ECLA MEETING IN APRIL 1974 IN SAN JOSE, CUBAN DELEGATION RAISED SAME MATTER WITH RESPECT TO PUERTO RICO. AT THAT TIME PR OFFICIALS PROVIDED FOR US DEL USE THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION:

A. A REPORT WAS PREPARED ON PROBLEMS OF EMPLOYMENT IN PUERTO RICO WHICH CONTAINED SEVERAL PAGES OF DISCUSSION RELATING RAPID POPULATION GROWTH TO PROBLEMS OF EMPLOYMENT. WHILE THE REPORT MADE RECOMMENDATIONS CONCERNING AVAILABILITY OF FAMILY PLANNING (FP), IT DID NOT PROPOSE THAT MASS STERILIZATION BE GIVEN PARTICULAR EMPHASIS WITHOUT REGARD TO PROTECTION OF HEALTH OR MENTAL STABILITY OF WOMEN; IT URGED ALL MEANS FP EXCEPT ABORTION BE MADE READILY AVAILABLE ON VOLUNTARY BASIS EMPHASIZING FREE CHOICE OF METHODS BY ACCEPTORS, DESCRIBED AIM AS MAKING PEOPLE AWARE OF ALTERNATIVES AND OF EFFECTS AND RISKS OF EACH, AND RECOMMENDED APPOINTMENT FP COMMISSION TO LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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INCLUDE MANY AGENCIES OF GOVERNMENT TO COLLECT STATISTICS, MAKE STUDIES, AND PREPARE PERIODIC EVALUATIONS.

B. FP HIGHLY POPULAR IN PR AND ABOUT ONE-THIRD OF PUERTO RICAN WOMEN IN REPRODUCTIVE AGES HAVE HAD STERILIZATION. STUDY SHOWS 160,363 WOMEN OUT OF 485,948 OF REPRODUCTIVE AGES OUTSIDE MUNICIPALITY OF SAN JUAN HAVE HAD VOLUNTARY STERILIZATIONS. 70 PERCENT OF THESE ARE WOMEN OF UPPER

AND MIDDLE INCOME LEVELS WHO HAVE PAID PRIVATE PRACTITIONERS FOR OPERATION. REMAINING 30 PERCENT HAVE RECEIVED FREE SERVICES, WHICH ARE PROVIDED ONLY ON REQUEST OF WOMAN. ACCEPTOR, TO QUALIFY, MUST MAKE WRITTEN REQUEST SUPPORTED BY REQUEST OF HUSBAND, MAKE DECLARATION SHE HAS HAD FOUR OR MORE CHILDREN AND PRODUCE BIRTH CERTIFICATES. EACH WOMAN RECEIVES COUNSELLING ON MEANING OF OPERATION AND MEDICAL EXAMINATION APPROPRIATE FOR SURGICAL PATIENT. REQUEST MUST BE SUBMITTED TO BOARD OF FIVE MEDICAL DOCTORS TO DECIDE WHETHER SHE WILL BE PERMITTED OPERATION.

C. FP SERVICES BEING PROVIDED 60,000 WOMEN IN SAN JUAN AND 75,000 ELSEWHERE IN PR BY DEPT. HEALTH AND PRIVATE ASSOCIACION PRO-BIENESTAR FAMILIAR. SOME 250,000 OTHERS NOT RECEIVING FP SERVICES.

6. ABOVE INFORMATION IS FOR POST'S USE IN WHATEVER MANNER DEEMED APPROPRIATE IN RESPONDING TO QUERIES REGARDING ALLEGATIONS IN MEXICAN PRESS. DEPARTMENT WONDERS IF IT WOULD BE PRODUCTIVE TO DIGNIFY ALLEGATIONS WITH DENIAL. WOULD NOT WISH TO BE IN POSITION OF MEXICANS SAYING "YOU DO" AND US SAYING "WE DO NOT" AD INFINITUM, PARTICULARLY IF DENIAL AT THIS POINT WOULD LEAD TO INCREASED PRESS ATTENTION AND FURTHER ALLEGATIONS IN REBUTTAL OUR STATEMENTS. KISSINGER

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## Message Attributes

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**To:** MEXICO  
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